

Message Text

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ORIGIN FAA-00

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - AVIATION SAFETY

REF : LONDON 16832 (NOTAL)

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

1. FYI: REFERENCE CABLE NOTES THAT RECENT PUBLICITY IN UK ARISING FROM REPORT OF A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE DEC 28, COULD UNDERMINE CONFIDENCE WHICH BRITISH PUBLIC AND AVIATION AUTHORITIES HAVE ALWAYS PLACED IN U.S. AVIATION SAFETY STANDARDS; POST REQUESTS ASSISTANCE IN COUNTERING THIS EFFECT. FOR PRESENT, DOT/FAA HAS PROVIDED PARA 2 FOR POSTS INFO ONLY REMAINDER OF THIS TELEGRAM FOR GENERAL USE. IF INQUIRIES ARE RECEIVED ON SPECIFIC AREAS IN WHICH THE UK OR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OTHER GOV'T OR INDUSTRY REPS INDICATE LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN

FAA, EMB SHOULD REFER THESE QUESTIONS TO DEPT FOR FAA WHICH WILL BE PLEASED TO PROVIDE DETAILED BRIEFING ON THE SPECIFIC AREAS IN QUESTION.

2. THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION ARE PERSONALLY REVIEWING ALL ASPECTS OF AVIATION SAFETY AND WILL DISCUSS "CRITICAL ISSUES" RAISED IN THE REPORT. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION IS CONVENING MEETING JAN 15 INCLUDING ALL FAA REGIONAL DIRECTORS AND TOP OFFICIALS OF THE DEPT AND THE FAA. THE MEETING WILL EXPLORE IN DEPTH THE "APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE" OF THE FAA AND THE FAA MANAGEMENT'S PHILOSOPHY IN DEVELOPING AND CARRYING OUT ITS VARIOUS MISSIONS. END FYI.

3. ALTHOUGH RECENT ADVERSE PUBLICITY PRESENTS U.S. CIVIL AVIATION IN UNFAVORABLE LIGHT, IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY OFFICIALS EMBASSIES MAY WISH TO REFER TO EXCELLENT U.S. RECORD AND THE HIGH AND CONSTANTLY IMPROVING LEVEL OF AVIATION SAFETY.

4. IMPROVEMENT IN THE RECORD IS DEMONSTRATED BY A COMPARISON OF THE TWO MOST RECENT FIVE-YEAR PERIODS FOR WHICH DATA ARE READILY AVAILABLE. DURING THE PERIOD 1964 THROUGH 1968 FATAL ACCIDENTS INVOLVING U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN SCHEDULED SERVICE OCCURRED AT THE RATE OF .51 ACCIDENTS PER 100 MILLION AIRCRAFT MILES FLOWN. IN THE SUCCEEDING FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, 1969 THROUGH 1973, THE FATAL ACCIDENT RATE FELL TO .23 ACCIDENTS PER 100 MILLION AIRCRAFT MILES FLOWN. THE SAFETY RECORD OF U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT PERFORMING SCHEDULED SERVICES WAS TWICE AS GOOD IN THE LAST FIVE-YEAR PERIOD CONTRASTED WITH THE PREVIOUS FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS IS FURTHER ACCENTUATED BY THE FACT THAT DURING THE TEN-YEAR PERIOD, 1964 THROUGH 1973, APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF OF ALL AIRCRAFT MILES FLOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN SCHEDULED AIR SERVICE WERE FLOWN BY U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT.

5. THE EXCELLENCE OF THE U.S. AVIATION SAFETY RECORD IS FURTHER BORNE OUT BY COMPARING THE FATAL ACCIDENT RATE OF U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN SCHEDULED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SERVICES WITH (1) THE WORLD AVERAGE ACCIDENT RATE AND (2) THE AVERAGE ACCIDENT RATE OF ALL NON-U.S. AIR CARRIERS. DURING THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, 1964 THROUGH 1968, U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN SCHEDULED SERVICES EXPERIENCED A FATAL ACCIDENT RATE OF .51 ACCIDENTS PER 100 MILLION AIRCRAFT MILES; THE WORLD AVERAGE RATE WAS .98, WHILE THE AVERAGE RATE OF ALL NON-U.S. CARRIERS WAS 1.52.

THUS, THE SAFETY RECORD OF U.S. AIR CARRIERS IN 1964-68 WAS ROUGHLY TWICE AS GOOD AS THE WORLD AVERAGE (WHICH INCLUDES U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT) AND ALMOST THREE TIMES BETTER THAN THE AVERAGE FOR ALL NON-U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT.

6. IN THE FOLLOWING FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, 1969 THROUGH 1973, THE FATAL ACCIDENT RATE FOR U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT FELL TO .23 ACCIDENTS PER 100 MILLION AIRCRAFT MILES FLOWN WHILE THE WORLD AVERAGE RATE DECLINED TO .74; THE AVERAGE RATE FOR ALL NON-U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT FELL TO 1.34. THUS, IN THIS

LATTER FIVE-YEAR PERIOD THE SAFETY RECORD OF U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN SCHEDULED SERVICES WAS THREE TIMES BETTER THAN THE WORLD AVERAGE AND OVER FOUR TIMES BETTER THAN THAT FOR ALL NON-U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ENGAGED IN SCHEDULED SERVICES.

7. THE ABOVE COMPARISON SUGGESTS THAT THE SAFETY RECORD OF U.S. AVIATION IS NOT ONLY VERY HIGH AND MUCH BETTER THAN THAT OF THE WORLD AVERAGE, BUT IS ALSO IMPROVING AT A PACE FASTER THAN THE REMAINDER OF THE WORLD.

8. NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE THE U.S. WISHES TO ASSURE THAT EVERY POSSIBLE STEP BE TAKEN TO ASSURE THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL OF AVIATION SAFETY, BOTH THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE FAA ADMINISTRATOR ARE EXPLORING IN DEPTH ALL POSSIBLE WAYS OF STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING THE AVIATION SAFETY FUNCTION.

9. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THESE FAVORABLE STATISTICS
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FOR U.S. REGISTERED AIRCRAFT ARE PREPONDERANTLY BASED UPON THE PERFORMANCE OF U.S. AIRCRAFT HOLDING FAA CERTIFICATES OF AIRWORTHINESS. KISSINGER

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